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Oil Problems and Atoms

THE OIL shortage is probably just the sort of problem which this country is best qualified to cope with. It has a beautifully technical-industrial organizational flavor which the American economy eats up. The very long, very cold spell in the East, with many families uncomfortable and really chilled in their homes, and with the resulting practical prospect of gasoline shortages next summer, will most probably furnish a stimulus sharp enough to bring some action to solve the close range problem.

Then, the Department of Interior is working on experiments to make oil and gasoline from coal and shale, and private industry is finally going into the possibilities on a large scale. The Pittsburgh Consolidation Coal Company, the world's largest commercial coal producer, working with Standard Oil of New Jersey and Hydrocarbon Research, Inc., has announced that if a model plant they are operating proves practical as expected, then by 1950 or 1951, they will erect a $120,000,000 big scale operation. This is the kind of thing to be expected from American business.

Less complicated scientifically (although the Germans were largely successful at it), but far more complex politically is the potential of Middle Eastern oil. A third of the world's oil reserves are supposed to be there, and the wells of the area are extraordinarily economical to work because their daily yield is tremendous (US daily output averages 11.5 barrels per well; Iraq, 8,818). Secretary Krug comments, "Obviously, as a nation we cannot afford to become dependent on a long supply line from the Middle East for a commodity as important to our well-being as petroleum."

Conservation at home, the elimination of waste and the rational exploitation of various sources of energy also appear to be measures not to count upon. It will take more than a decade before possible social and political—and moral—education will reform our manners of exploiting natural resources and sabotaging creative invention. Planners of any stripe whatever tend to go crazy when they speculate on the "logical" development, harnessing and utilization of the energy sources which are available—like the sun, coal, oil, water, vegetables.

But as the 12½ years run out, while domestic oil reserves theoretically last, it will most likely be nuclear fission which develops to offer the substitute source of energy. Beneath the problem of oil furnaces, diesel locomotives, and more and more cars, lies the question of atomic energy. The atom bomb could be quite eliminated from historical computation, and still the new nuclear knowledge would involve a technological revolution of unimaginable dimensions. Every day below freezing, every mile we drive our cars, hurries forward the time and circumstances when we must really face the fact that men know how to split the atom.

Palestine

THE UNITED NATIONS five-man Palestinian Committee in its first report to the Security Council has gone on record that "it is the considered view of the Commission that the security force of the mandatory power must be replaced by an adequate non-Palestinian force." The United States not only supported, but lobbied for the Palestinian resolution recommending partition. This recommendation, which was an appeal to the member states, did not however include any contractual obligation on the part of any member state to enforce action. So far, the Arab States have been within their legal rights in rejecting the UN recommendation. Though what the Arab legal position will be, if they resist a UN police force, remains to be seen: the Arabs

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have declared that they will regard "any attempt by any power . . . to establish a Jewish state in Arab territory as an act of aggression which will be resisted in self-defense by force" and that the only way "to establish partition is first wipe them out".

The British position is clear enough: they have been dismissed, with some contumely, and are glad to go. The more so since Arab attacks on British troops have increased, "due to nervousness, especially in rural areas, caused by the frequent use by the Jews of British uniforms in order to facilitate offensive actions."

Even if it were entirely empty, Palestine would still be an evasion. Were the UN to use atomic energy to fecundate the Sahara, or to fertilize the Gobi desert, and made over these vast areas to the Jews, we would still, in seeking to salve our communal guilt, be following a custom permitted by the Koran in the absence of water; we would be washing our hands of Jewish blood in African or Asian sand, instead of, as at present, with Arab earth.

It is largely by our fault that the Jews feel they must have a separate place, that they cannot be, as so many of them earnestly desire, simply good Americans, or Austrians, or Frenchmen or Poles, good citizens of the country in which they, like the rest of us, and their ancestors, like ours, were born and raised, and to which they, like us, felt they belonged until we Christians taught them to feel otherwise. There is grave danger than in taking the Jews out of the European concentration camps (and some of them have declared the stockades are not to keep anyone in, but other people out) and clearing an internationally guaranteed space for them, that space may become an international concentration camp, to which every country, looking for a political scapegoat, will upon occasion drive its Jews. Since there are in America more Jews than ever could crowd into Palestine, and a million Jews in Arab countries and over a million in Algeria, who have hitherto lived in peace with their Arab neighbors, but can hardly do so henceforth, Palestine well may become the greatest ghetto of them all.

Yet, what is now the alternative? To get out of the whole mess, by going back on our own recommendation? That would be letting down more than a bamboozled old Presbyterian (as Lord Keynes called President Wilson) and would jeopardise ERP; it would also be changing horses crossing stream—when that stream is Jordan river.

Channel Puerto Rican Migration

A highly complicated and thoroughly critical situation is revealed in the unanimously adopted report of the Welfare Council on Puerto Rico under the chairmanship of G. Howland Shaw, former Assistant Secretary of State. In reaching its conclusions this widely representative New York committee enjoyed the collaboration of the Department of the Interior in Washington and the Government of Puerto Rico itself.

What has been happening is that under the pressure of poverty and the promise of opportunity in the United States, thousands of Puerto Ricans have been leaving their homes to settle in New York City. They have concentrated on Harlem and surrounding areas (already terribly congested) where relatives and friends were living. This migration has been particularly heavy since last May. Few people have been aware of it. Only when some chartered crate has crashed in a Florida swamp or a peculiarly sensational act of violence has been recorded near the north end of Central Park, has the public had an inkling of this sizable population movement. Not so the local police precincts, hospitals, public health authorities and welfare agencies. The conditions are appalling and steadily deteriorating.

One of the elements which makes the problem so delicate is that as American citizens the people from the Island have every legal right to settle anywhere in the United States. Even if they wanted, the authorities could not bar their coming. All signs—economic and otherwise—indicate that they will continue to arrive in large numbers. The unavoidable answer for such a prospect is a resettlement agency.

But, as the committee maintains, great care has to be exercised lest the very formation of an agency result in accelerating this northward migration. There is also danger that such an agency will create the impression that migration is the only solution for the ills which have for so long harried Puerto Rico.

Perhaps to skirt all these dangers safely is too much to expect of any actual political instrument; yet something decisive must be done, for the Puerto Ricans continue to arrive and, due to the lack of readiness for them continue to aggravate community conditions already verging on the unspeakable.

Such an agency would maintain a continuing survey of employment conditions in those industries in which the new arrivals would be employable; keep a parallel organization in Puerto Rico apprised of such conditions; provide trained personnel as advisers during the period of adjustment to this country and prepare certain areas staffed by a select group of Puerto Ricans to receive the new arrivals.

If given a decent chance, these people do succeed. They are excellent agricultural workers and should prove extremely welcome in the West. Even with the handicap of speaking only Spanish, at first, some seventy percent of the Puerto Ricans in New York City have in spite of everything obtained full-time employment. They require decent

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places to live, classes in English, vocational training, instruction in child care and all manner of professional advice. City authorities are unequal to the task even at its present proportions. The United States cannot today fulfil the responsibility we assumed a half century ago without a Puerto Rico migration agency.

Recantation

SHOSTAKOVICH, Prokofieff and Khatchaturian have been condemned, and it is not the way it looks when you see their names in a row, it is not an exotic law firm that is in trouble for malpractice; these three are the best known Russian composers of the day. (Shostakovich is the "Leningrad Symphony," Prokofieff, "Peter and the Wolf," or "Classical Symphony" if you want; I have never heard anything by Khatchaturian.) They have been condemned by the Central Committee of the Communist Party because their works "smell strongly of the spirit of the modern bourgeois music of Europe and America which reflect the marasmus of bourgeois culture, the complete denial of musical art." The act of accusation, even as summarized in the American press, and although most interesting, is too long to quote. It mentions "formalistic distortions and anti-democratic tendencies alien to the Soviet people, denial of the main principles of classical music, dissonance and disharmony which are alleged to be the expression of 'progress' " and so forth—in the vein, of course, of all the conservative Western bourgeois critics who have been saying the same things ever since Beethoven. There is this difference: the Western bourgeois critics were not in government, consequently the bourgeois Beethoven, the bourgeois Chopin, the bourgeois Wagner, fought back against the critics and wrote as they pleased—as does, in America, the bourgeois Stravinsky.

There is no point in attempting to defend Khatchaturian, Prokofieff and Shostakovich; they do not desire to be defended; they desire to submit. Here is the statement from Prokofieff: "However hard it is for me to realize that I was among those who expressed a formalistic trend, I am convinced that the Soviet people and the musical public will help me to overcome this trend in my work, and that my future creations will be worthy of my people and my great country."

Abject. Of course. But wait a minute. Hold everything.

The Greeks of antiquity thought there was such a thing as immoral music, the freest intelligences in France thought that there could be immoral music and that Wagner wrote it, Nietzsche thought that there could be such a thing as *moral* music and that Bizet wrote it; everyone in his senses knows that there is a moral, a spiritual difference between such music as Bach's or Mozart's and the slobbering, abandoned self-abasement that the disk jockeys give you when you turn the dial at night because you cannot sleep.

No man is an island; no art is an island; the artist reflects, and affects, the civilization, the faith, he serves. For that reason Prokofieff's abject, crawling retraction need not be more humiliating, in essence, than a Catholic writer's recantation of error. If induced by fear, if compelled by torture, both the Marxist's and the Catholic's recantations bring as deep, as disconsolate a wound to the spirit of the institutions to which they are made as they do to those who make them. If induced by love, faith and devotion, they are free acts and honorable. "It is only when you have suffered what you think is injustice at the hands of the Church that you can measure your devotion to it." And that goes for Marxism too.

Here, once again, is the general problem of orthodoxy—how to maintain pure the truth in which you believe. In the long run—for the deepest reasons of morality and respect for man's integrity—compulsion will not and cannot save the truth. The truth, the orthodoxy of the truth, can only be saved by man's devotion to the institutions which he believes hold it firm. That devotion must often find its necessary expression in submission to authority, in recantation of error.

It is a pragmatic matter if nothing else, if nothing higher—the Constitution, the Supreme Court, of the United States, Stalin, the Pope in Rome. It is a pragmatic matter on the civil plane as well as on the religious; it is the mechanism by which we avoid chaos. More precisely the mechanism by which those who believe in a central core of doctrine act, of their own free will, to preserve that doctrine intact—no matter what the doctrine may be.

I hope that this quotation from André Gide's "Journal" will not be taken as applying in any narrow sense to Protestantism. I am using it to illuminate the process which leads Stalin to act as he does and Prokofieff to submit as he has. It is an entry for 1896: "Excellent article by Fouillée [of whom I have never heard] on Auguste Comte [whom I have never read]. . . . Since there is no limit to free inquiry, Protestantism created a limitless, hence indefinite, hence indefinable religion, which would not know, if free inquiry should introduce atheism, whether or not atheism is a part of Protestantism; a religion which does not know where it stops or where it is heading. . . .' "

That is a condition which neither Marxism nor Catholicism within their spheres can tolerate. It happens also to be a condition which political democracy, if it is to exist, must tolerate. The problem of orthodoxy, of the survival of the truths in which we believe, is not an easy one. That is why it is best not to laugh too easily about Prokofieff.

C. G. PAULDING.

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Gandhi's Negative Way

Anne Fremantle

THE RIG-VEDA, composed some fifteen hundred years before Christ, declares that the world rests on the sacrifice of God. This idea, basic to Hinduism, as it is to the later Buddhism, was basic also to the philosophy of Gandhi. But what is peculiar in his case is that he came to his own largely via the West. He first read the Bragavad-Gita in the English translation of Sir Edwin Arnold, called "The Song Celestial," and also though he studied Sanskrit assiduously in his spare time (the only "spare time" he ever had after he grew up was in prison!), he complained that he never could read the Hindu Scriptures in the original with any ease.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born of pious parents. His mother lived a life of selfless devotion; his father gave to charity all he might have saved. The Gandhis were of good caste, and well-to-do. Gandhi's father was premier of the little state of Porbunder where his children were born and where Gandhi went to the local school until he was seven. He went on to public school in Rajkot, then to high school till seventeen, then for two years to the University of Ahmedabad. He was betrothed at seven and married before he was thirteen. Though he loved his wife devotedly until her death (his touching reference to her, in his last conversation with Vincent Sheean, is most moving), he could find no excuse for such a "preposterous early marriage."

Gandhi's family were Jains, who are, as it were, the Quakers of Hinduism: they carry the Hindu doctrine of the sacredness of all life to the point of trying to avoid even treading on an insect. Gandhi, at high school, went through the usual adolescent period of atheism; he and his companions bought meat with their pocket money and ate it surreptitiously. But Gandhi could not take it; he felt as though the dead goat were bleeding into his own entrails, and he almost choked as he lied to his family to explain his lack of appetite. Soon he repented and wrote down a confession of his sin and took it to his father, who tore the paper to pieces and never again referred to it.

It was in London that, lonely, cold, shy and strange, the tiny Indian student, cooking vegetarian messes on a gas ring in his boarding house room somewhere in one of those sooty, dilapidated squares near the British Museum, first met "real" Christianity, as he called it; not "so-called." He was trying desperately hard to become Westernized. In order to try and keep time at his dancing lessons, he was struggling to learn to play the fiddle. He was also struggling, and failing, to learn to tie his tie. But nothing could make him able to keep time to Western music, nor arrive at the right degree of nattiness in Western dress. It was at this nadir that he discovered Western literature and religion, and fared better. The writings that influenced him most, he tells us in his tremendously intimate, truthful, simple autobiography, were first the Sermon on the Mount, then Tolstoy's "The Kingdom of God Is Within You," Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olives," and "Unto This Last," and Thoreau's writings. It was from these three that he learnt the technique of passive resistance: from Christ, non-violence; from Tolstoy, non-cooperation; from Thoreau, disobedience. There was a time, he wrote "when I was wavering between Hinduism and Christianity. When I recovered my balance of mind, I felt that to me salvation was possible only through the Hindu religion." His chief objection to Christianity, he was to say later over and over again, was its exclusiveness: that the sacrifice of Christ alone redeemed all men always, he could not admit, nor that those who were outside Christianity were outside the love of God. It is a tremendous pity that the Christians he met, all through his life, were sectarian evangelicals, of enormous personal piety and integrity but intellectually and theologically uneducated. Gandhi's subtle, complex mind would have delighted in Catholic philosophy. The intellectual exercise provided by Hindu philosophy, purely from the technical point of view, is far nearer Saint Thomas than John Wesley! And Gandhi was to arrive by his own efforts at an approximation of the Christian rather than the Hindu doctrine of the Communion of Saints. His one recorded contact with the Church was his visit in South Africa to a Trappist Monastery, and he always declared he got his idea of the use of silence from the Trappists, and owed them the habits he found so salutary—indeed, so essential to his health. One of the great disadvantages of Protestant Christianity in India and throughout the East is that it has been the official religion of the occupying power. First bayonets, then Bibles, in China as in India; and Gandhi once wrote how heartily he commended Lord Salisbury for refusing protection for some missionaries to China who were clamoring to him for it: "Christian missionaries

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come to India under the shadow, or if you like, under the protection, of the temporal power, and it creates an impassable bar."

Curiously, Gandhi always regarded Christ as a great politician. "Jesus, in my humble opinion, was a prince among politicians," he said, seeing in His detaching of the Jews from the power of the Sanhedrin and the Pharisees the only way that would have led them, if they followed, also to freedom from the Roman power.

The greatest Western influence in Gandhi's life, after that of the Gospels, was that of Tolstoy. Gandhi's first experiment, when he was struggling for the rights of his own people in South Africa ("I learned then that because I was an Indian I was not a man. I had no rights as a man.") he called Tolstoy Farm, in the Transvaal. Gandhi wrote to Tolstoy and told him about the farm, and in 1903 Tolstoy replied in a letter which concluded, prophetically, "therefore your activity in the Transvaal, as it seems to us at this end of the world, is the most essential work, the most important of all the work now being done in the world, wherein not only the nations of Christendom, but all the world will unavoidably take part." Many of Gandhi's economic ideas stem from Tolstoy, as well as his realization that the human being was the only thing of importance. Tolstoy himself, of course, owed in turn a tremendous amount to Eastern philosophy, from his youth in 1844 when he was studying Oriental languages, throughout his life. In 1847, when ill in a hospital, Tolstoy talked much with a Buddhist lama who was on the next bed: the lama had been attacked on a sled journey through Siberia, and had offered no resistance, only prayed to Buddha to pardon his offenders. Tolstoy had many visitors belonging to the Arya Samaj, the reforming Hindu movement, and he studied the Jainist doctrines, and the mystic, Kabir, who was half Muslim, half Hindu. Tolstoy also, in 1910, read a book on Gandhi. Both men agreed on essentials. "Man's destiny is to perfect himself," wrote Tolstoy, and Gandhi, "man's duty is a continual effort towards perfection, that is itself its own reward." And also, "the essential is that the individual effort, however small, should master laziness, greed, covetousness, anger and sorrow: this is the most important thing in the world."

Gandhi developed Tolstoy's economic ideas to suit India's needs. It was not, indeed, until after his return to India during World War I (he had been absent in South Africa and in England for many years) that Gandhi really developed the economic ideas which were to count as much in the liberation of India as did his political or religious concepts.

The Satyagraha movement began officially on February 28, 1919. English capital had, in the interests of English stockholders, deliberately and persistently ruined the old indigenous Indian home industries. The English cheap cottons imported from Manchester and the Midlands increasingly ruined, throughout the nineteenth century, millions of Indian handworkers, and reduced to poverty millions of small farm workers and tenants, who, during six months of the year, had previously lived from their spinning wheels. In a predominantly agricultural country, the individual spinning and production of cotton cloth was an immediate means of raising the standard of living, if only by a few cents a year. Since the national average wage in India up to today has been under $5 *a year*, if all buying of foreign cloth were eliminated, then home spinning would be a tangible, concrete benefit and bonus. It was on this issue that Gandhi parted from Tagore. Tagore said God was infinitely wasteful, recked not of food, but asked poems. Gandhi replied that the hungry millions asked one poem only, invigorating food. Tagore blamed Gandhi for his concern with practical matters. Gandhi retorted that "when all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible to me is to feed the hungry. Hunger is the argument that is drawing India to the spinning wheel. The only acceptable form in which God can dare appear is work and the promise of food as wages." Gandhi had compassion on the multitudes, and Christlike also was his essentially practical emphasis: the hungry are fed, the blind see, the lame are made whole. As the symbol of the unity given to all Christians by Christ Himself was food—bread and wine—so the symbol of the unity of all India given by Gandhi was the means to food—the spinning wheel.

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With the introduction of two million spinning wheels, Gandhi declared, the economic freedom of India could be attained at one blow. "For me, the spinning wheel and khaddar (homespun cloth) are the symbols of all-Indian unity, therefore I regard them as a national sacrament." It is a pathetic proof of his truth that the erstwhile proud British Empire has now humbly come hawking the products of its home industries here in America in order to obtain the dollars without which its economy will be in a most parlous condition! "The very mistaken belief that we contemplated retreat from India. . . . India could not challenge with success the most determined people in the world," Lord Birkenhead telegraphed to Edwin Montagu. But like the "gray Galilean," the wizened Gandhi, who spent so large a part of his life in English jails, "challenged" with an overwhelming, unlooked for "success" indeed.

But Gandhi was not against machinery in prin-

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ciple. "How could that be possible," he asked Ramahandran, Tagore's disciple. "I know that my own body is nothing but an extraordinarily constructed machine; so is the spinning wheel; so is every toothpick even. It is only because machinery saves labor, and men save labor, until thousands die of hunger on the streets." Nor was he against capitalism. In a talk with Arthur Holischer, he said: "I would not destroy capitalism, I would only change its temporal form; its essence I cannot destroy, because I offer it no resistance." Equally, he was not in principle opposed to cities: "The key industries, the industries which the nation needs, may be centralized. The proper function of cities is to serve as clearing houses for village products." But meanwhile, there were the bonfires of foreign cloth, which were objected to as vigorously as the spilling of Magdalen's ointment, and for the same reason, that they "might have been given to the poor." But Gandhi was practical there too; the rich stuffs and foreign splendors burnt were totally unsuitable for wear by peasants, as he pointed out. There were over a million and a half prostitutes in India: Gandhi declared that if they all took to spinning and weaving, a daily income of 1.5 million rupees would accrue to India. Personally, too, he found the spinning wheel most helpful: "While I read the Gita or the Ramayana, my thoughts fly far away. But when I turn to the spinning wheel my attention is directed on a single point. Not one impure thought haunts me in those four hours."

Gandhi's choice of the wheel, as symbol and as security, is particularly interesting when considered in connection with the wheel's long history in India. The wheel in Hindu mythology is the symbol of recurrence, of the cycle of reincarnations the soul must suffer. Of this wheel Gandhi makes salvation from suffering, and its dynamism as symbol is interesting when compared with the static quality of modern Western symbols: hammer and sickle, fasces or swastika.

★

Gandhi's non-violence, also, has been much misunderstood. He chose it, not because it was a way down, but a way up. There is nothing masochistic, suicidal or apologetic in his concept of non-violence. He preached it because it was the most immediate, most practical way to be successful. In a country where no Indians were allowed weapons, lest they turn them against their conquerors, violence was impracticable. But the non-violent must be as ready to suffer and to die as the violent. "Where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I advise violence," Gandhi wrote. "I cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. He who runs away commits mental violence, because he has not the courage to be killed while he kills." And it was mob violence Gandhi feared and abhorred more than anything else. As if he foresaw his own end in India's beginning, he declared he considered "mobocracy the greatest danger that menaces India."

His view of extreme pacifism was arrived at gradually. In the South African war he organized the Indian Red Cross, and was twice cited for bravery under fire, and again served as a stretcher-bearer in World War I. He came, above all, to see the uselessness of violence—"They that take the sword shall perish by the sword"—and to realize that if the individual is valuable absolutely, then every single individual must be absolutely valuable, under all circumstances: every English life must be as sacred to him, as those of "our dear ones." His fasts were always in recognition of this: indeed, he fasted oftener in expiation of the violence of his own followers than in protest against the British.

Though he admired Mazzini and Edward Carpenter, and though to the very last day of his life he gladly acknowledged his debt to the West, and though he translated the Trial and Death of Socrates into the language of his people (this was confiscated by the British in 1919, and remained a Forbidden Book), yet the greater his knowledge and understanding became of the West, the greater also his insistence that what was needed above all for India was a reaffirmation of her own truths. Thus, although he condemned untouchability and himself adopted a little untouchable girl and called his paper *"Harijan,"* which is the Indian nickname for "Untouchable," yet he approved the caste system, "The law of heredity is an eternal law, and any attempt to alter it must lead to utter confusion. The caste system is inherent in human nature," he wrote. He also disapproved of intermarriage. "License in the matter of marriage is detrimental to the welfare of posterity. The restrictions on marriage imposed by society as the result of a considered experiment must not be lightly tampered with." Nor did he see much point in "inter-feeding": "A father is not bound to dine with his son. Eating is best done privately," he ruled. And he declared, "I can no more describe my feeling for Hinduism than for my own wife. She moves me as no other woman in the world can: the feeling of an indissoluble bond is there."

Finally, as first, Gandhi's emphasis is on sacrifice. And it is by demonstrating with his own body, and now, alas, by his own death, that Gandhi has re-stated, uniquely, an eternal truth. "His compassion and tenderness are infinite: I have watched him wipe with his own garment the sores of a leper," wrote the Right Hon. S. Sastri, one of his own people. And "It seems to me," wrote the completely occidental Louis Fischer, after spending ten days with him, "that the chief reason for Gandhi's influence is his passion."

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"That is right," Mahadev Desai, his secretary, replied. "What is the root of his passion?" Louis Fischer asked. "His passion," Desai explained, "is his sublimation of all the passions that flesh is heir to." "Sex?" asked Fischer. "Sex, and anger and personal ambition," replied Desai.

God is, even though the world deny Him, Gandhi declared, as he demonstrated anew the validity of the negative way. "Niet, niet." God is not this, not that, cries orthodox Hindu theology, as the whole affirmation of dogmatic Christendom is also by negation: if any one deny that God exists, let him be anathema. By seeking to eliminate the unnecessary—in his own personal life, anger, sex, appetite, ambition; in the life of his people, violence, hatred, communal tensions—Gandhi taught himself and taught his own people, who comprise one-fifth of the whole human race. And there is much in his life and his teaching that is eternally valid for the other four-fifths also.

A Letter on Anti-Semitism

Jacques Maritain

The following is the text sent from Rome to Dr. Pierre Visseur of the International Council of Christians and Jews to be communicated to the Congress which took place at Seelisberg.—THE EDITORS.

WITH GREAT regret at not being able to be present at the Seelisberg Congress, I beg you to transmit to its members my most fervent wishes for the success of their work. Wholeheartedly I associate myself with the aims of the Congress. The struggle against anti-Semitism is a fundamental duty for consciences and it is a primordial necessity for the moral health of what we have left of civilization. I hope fervently that the Congress will furnish a new impulse in this struggle and that it will propose practical measures to make it effective in Europe and in America. It is not enough that a certain number of Christians save our honor through heroic testimony, as we have seen them do in the abominable years from which only now we are partly issuing, and which have left humanity with wounds long years will not cure. To save our honor is a sad, bitter consolation, a consolation which would end by becoming entirely worthless should we not succeed, finally, and really, in overcoming the shameful evil against which we protest.

So long as a world which adheres to Christian civilization is not cured of anti-Semitism, it will drag with it a sin which will stand between it and recovery. For the Jews ever remain beloved for the sake of their forefathers, and it is the mystery itself of the economy of Redemption—before which Saint Paul fell to his knees—that racist hatred and prejudices attack. Nazism bared to our sight the true face of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism hides behind an infinite variety of masks and pretexts—but in truth it is Jesus Christ Whom it seeks to strike, striking at His race.

Six million Jews have been "liquidated" in Europe. Other human masses have been deliberately exterminated, and by the millions also, in the name of *"Lebensraum,"* or by political cruelty. They put the Jews to death through hatred of them *as a people,* and because they wanted to wipe their race from the face of the earth. And this bestial hatred had eyes that could see beyond natural things. For truly it was the "chosen" quality of the Jews,, truly it was Moses and the Prophets in the Jews, that the persecutors were persecuting. It was the Savior Who came from the Jewish people Whom the persecutors hated. It was Israel's dignity, into which the Catholic Church prays God to permit all nations to enter, that the persecutors insulted in the bodies of those despised Jews whom they treated as the vermin of the world. It is our God they buffeted and flagellated in His human lineage, before, openly, they persecuted Him in His Church.

Strangely wise and informed hatred, more perspicacious than the uncertain love in our hearts! Until that day foretold by Saint Paul when the Synagogue and the Church shall be reconciled, and which will be for the world as a resurrection from the dead, the two have been united as the object of this demonic hatred. Just as Christianity was hated for its Jewish origins, Israel was hated for its belief in original sin and in redemption, and for the Christian pity which sprang from it. According to a profound observation made by the Jewish writer, Maurice Samuel, it is not because they killed Christ, it is because they

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gave Christ to the world, that Hitler's anti-Semitic rage dragged the Jews over all the roads of Europe, through excrement and blood, and tore children from their mothers, from that moment deprived even of their names, and undertook to drive an entire race into despair.

And so without even knowing that it was so, Israel has been pursued by that same hatred which pursued also and previously Jesus Christ. Its Messiah made it, in the image of Himself, sorrowful and abject—before He shall make it in the image of Himself, one day, in light. Sanguinary first fruits of that plenitude of Israel of which Christians, if they look into their heart, can decipher the visible portents in the sequence of abominable events of which the memory will burn us ever, and which already are taking their place in the oubliettes of the survivors' indifference. Strange companions, Jews and Christians have walked together along the way of Calvary. The great and mysterious fact is that Israel's tribulations more and more distinctly have taken the form of the Cross.

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Will the Christians understand? That is the question which now arises. How long still will they sleep? For how long still will many of them repudiate, in fact, Saint Paul's teaching which instructs us that we have been grafted on the olive tree of Israel, and that we have become, with Israel, participants of the roots and the sap of that olive tree? "Spiritually we are all Semites," said Pope Pius XI. Before being a problem of blood, of physical life and death for the Jews, anti-Semitism is a problem of the spirit, of the spiritual life and death for Christians. Israel has a long habit of suffering and of persecution, it has borne them through the centuries; it expects them the while it fears them; it is well aware that its God, Who compels it to walk through the abyss, will lift it high above the abyss, and then plunge it into the abyss once again and lift it high above it once again. It is a thing strangely moving, and highly conducive to our looking back upon our own past in a spirit of humiliation—Christians of the Gentile race—to contemplate the sort of tragic sereneness with which a Jew, who has meditated upon the history of his people, speaks to us his certainty that Israel will never find either rest or pity.

But there is something that the anti-Semitic fury wounds and irremediably corrupts, and that is the Christian conscience. The despair of those who killed themselves because injustice triumphed itself is an image of a thing still more terrible: the corruption of the human soul within those who persecuted, and the gulf of perversion into which they risk hurling the human race. If Plato and Saint Thomas Aquinas are right when they say that it is better to suffer unjustly than criminally to make others suffer, and that the evil in the executioners is worse than the evil suffered by the victims, then we are obliged to conclude that the ravages caused by racism in the heart of the racists and the anti-Semites have been even more abominable than the tortures they inflicted upon a multitude of innocents.

In so far as a man yields to the prejudices of race and to that sort of modified anti-Semitism which, the while it deplores the massacres yet finds for them some excuse, and approves—with a transcendent political resignation to the doom of others—the laws, the customs, the habits of discrimination, and is all the more abject in that it takes shelter in good conscience, that man renders himself spiritually the accomplice of the demons whom the executioners obey. It is not only in order that the iniquity which weighs upon the innocents shall cease, it is also for its own salvation, and for the recovery of the world, that the Christian conscience must free itself of racist and anti-Semitic leprosy.

Through a shameful phenomenon, which our miserable human state amply suffices to explain, it is a fact that the extermination of millions of Jews, the gas chambers and the tortures of the death camps, have not been enough to awaken the conscience of the nations, and fire them with final horror for the racist principle. Far from it. On the contrary the virus has spread, under a more or less attenuated form, and the memory of that immense outbreak of murder and rape kindles in an appreciable number of honorable personages—with a wise distrust of, and a prudent disgust for the victims—mental excitement and rationalized passions which find expression and relief in a cold hostility, and in economic and political recriminations, doubtless not in pogroms and in assassinations, which the smell of blood has hiddenly and treacherously stimulated.

In many countries of the old and new world, anti-Semitism is growing; Hitler's lesson has made its way in men's minds. The old excuses are still available; we find a truly noble jealousy toward returned competitors (since not all the Jews are dead, those who remain, obviously, must live, and to live they must exert their professions, consequently Gentiles have nothing left to eat). We find such and such Jews taking part in political activities to which we object (as if they alone were responsible for such activities, and as if they alone made up the totality of Jews). People watch the Jews; and this oriented attention is in itself a psychological victory for racist propaganda and for the racist crimes.

As I brought out in another study, "once you route in a certain determined direction peoples' attention, they will notice immediately, once their attention has thus been focused, all sorts of acci-

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dental data which serve as excuse for spontaneous systematization, no matter how absurd it may be. Repeat, using all the methods of intensive propaganda, that the inhabitants of Fifth Avenue are thieves, and other New Yorkers will end by noticing—how extraordinary—that such and such a citizen, of whom they have reason to complain, lives precisely on Fifth Avenue. And such and such another citizen, equally disliked, as a fact, does also. Meanwhile objectionable personages who annoy us in other regions of the city escape all notice, of course, since they are out of the visual range which has been fixed for us. At the end of a few months you will have been able to create an anti-Fifth-Avenueism as reasonable and as clearly confirmed as anti-Semitism."[1]

Now, once again in the course of world history, the fundamental elements in the question of Israel's position among the nations have been profoundly altered. In our day the question has entered a new phase. For who among the Jews were more assimilated than the German Jews? And yet it was in Germany that the anti-Semitic fury burst out with unequaled ferocity. Faced with the bankruptcy of assimilation, the Jewish conscience turned in despair to the Promised Land. The movement which is urging the survivors of the Jewish masses of Central Europe, horrified by the abominations that they have suffered and haunted by the clamor of their dead, toward Palestine is an historical phenomenon—and it is irresistible. In one form or another, and implying agreement (which in itself does not seem to be impossible) with the Arab inhabitants of the land, it appears that the solution of a Hebrew state in Palestine, inevitably, will be the next solution attempted by the angel of an ever-sorrowful and frustrated history.

However necessary and justified this solution may be, we must not hide from ourselves the fact that it risks being exploited by anti-Semitism to the harm of the Jewish citizens of other nations. We shall have to make people understand that the existence of a Jewish state no more separates from their respective nationalities Jews who are members of other states, than the existence of an Irish state separates the Irish people in America from their American nationality. To cover anti-Semitic prejudices there will be a new crop of invalid pretexts, to add to the invalid pretexts which drag about everywhere, and we shall have to refute these new ones as we have the old. But the clearest rational arguments will never be effective since they face a collective and irrational psychosis drawing its strength from its very irrationality. That which is better and higher than reason, alone is capable of descending into the underground world of unreason, and of mastering it.

And here there stands before us the peculiar responsibility of the Christian conscience: it alone can free the soul from the poison of anti-Semitism, if aware truly of its own spirit, and if it truly carries into the substance of man's history the understanding and the testimony of its faith in Israel's mystery.

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In this brief note I do not take up the political and social implications of Israel's problem. However real they may be, they remain secondary in relation to their spiritual implications. It is of these latter that I should like to say a few words in conclusion. I am convinced in this connection that a great labor of meditation and of inner purification is required now of Christians. If they draw their nourishment from Saint Paul's doctrine, they will understand the spiritual significance of anti-Semitism, and at the same time they will understand the mysterious solidarity which links them to the elder race. It is in communion with this race, in spite of everything, that they invoke the Patriarchs and Prophets, and each day pray with the words of David on their lips, professing Him as come Whom the Synagogue has not recognized and still awaits, and professing Him Who, born of a virgin of Israel, and a Jew Himself "through inborn excellence," *"par excellence de nature,"* Whose Apostles and first martyrs were Jews, nourishing the church of the Jews and of the Gentiles with their Jewish blood poured forth for Christ. They will understand that they must not only sweep out like refuse, wherever unhappily there are still people who believe in them, slanderous legends such as the stories of ritual murder and such forgeries as the Protocols of Zion, but also that they will have most attentively to revise and purify their own language into which a routine, not always innocent, and in any case singularly careless of rigor and exactness, has allowed to creep absurd expressions such as that of the "Deicide Race," or a fashion, more racist than Christian, of narrating the story of the Passion so that it arouses hatred among Christian children for their Jewish school fellows, or translations of the phrase *"perfidia Judaica,"* in the Good Friday liturgy, which are no more than vulgar misreadings, for in the language of the Church this word signifies "unbelief" and not "perfidiousness." [2]

They will understand that their very manner of approaching the problems created by the Diaspora must be fraternal, and lead them to com-

[1] Le Droit Raciste et la vraie signification du Racisme, New York, 25 Janvier 1943 (*Pour le Justice,* New York, la Maison Française, 1945, chap. XXV).

[2] Cf. John M. Oesterreicher, "Pro Perfidis Judaeis." *Theological Studies,* March, 1947.

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prehend in depth, thanks to a sufficiently complete and scrupulous information—and to understand from within, thanks to the experience of co-nature that love carries with it—the anguish and the debate of the Jewish conscience, torn between the obligation of keeping its identity and the will to obtain for Jews the justice and equality due all men.

Then, Christians of the Gentile race will be able to enter a little into the mystery, and not only in theory, but in a real and practical manner —were it only to suffer in their turn because they do so, as several have recently suffered under the Nazi persecutions—into the mystery of that people which stumbled that they be saved and through whose disobedience they obtained mercy, and whom God continues to reserve for Himself. And then not only will they have barred anti-Semitism from seeking in the lower, permanent barbarian depths of the human soul any false religious pretext, but they will have done their part to prepare that coming reintegration, which Saint Paul announced, and which, for Israel, according to the word of Cornelius à Lapide, will not be a conversion but a fulfilment, and will recall to life a lukewarm world.[3]

Communications

"REPLACED PERSON"

Newcastle, N.B., Canada.

TO the Editors: I am grateful for the article from Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, but with all respect to an honorable publication I am not impressed by your comment.

Mr. von Kuehnelt-Leddihn is kind enough to say that you lost the war. I have moments when I should not be so kind. Hitler and Mussolini died wicked and violent deaths. Your own great charlatan died in his bed full of honor. The honor is the measure of our morals. Take what comfort you can from the fact that a case can be made that he wasn't so bad as they. But you destroyed the heart of Christendom and established the reign of Antichrist over the face of the earth. You cannot abstract your victory from that. Own it or disown it. You can't have it both ways.

You don't like *Mitgleiders* ["fellow-travelers," of the Nazi Party, etc.] I have no German but I'll risk the word in its context. I don't like them either. I find myself, however, too much occupied with the domestic varieties to sit in judgment on the foreign. I am also conscious that my own dissents still leave me living and ambulant, ragged but not yet starving. I have not been tested by the lash and do not wish to be.

Your next point is perhaps your best. In our experience it is quite impossible to deny that virtue and vice are rewarded and punished in time, though not completely. Nevertheless in view of the hell in which the peoples of the Eurasian continent are plunged indiscriminately, it is obvious that justice in time is neither certain nor necessary. North America, however rich, however powerful, however vain in its comfortable ignorance, is only a splinter of humanity. We are not the world. Neither are we outside the world. Though we live on an island we are not immune from human ills, human sin and human pain. We are in fact rather fortunate than virtuous and (humanly) inclined to confuse the two. A change of fortune may one day modify our judgment.

It is doubtless bad form to say "I told you so." The prophet is not without honor except in his own country, except in Anglo-Saxony, where no prophet is honored whatever his country. Lack of vision with us is less a defect than a cult. One is tempted to suspect a subconscious fear that if ever we knew what we were doing we might somehow be held responsible for our actions. I fail to see that a vested interest in a nation necessarily entails acceptance of its political and other aberrations. I haven't read "The Menace of the Herd" but I am well aware of the menace. I have however no immediate solution to the problem. Prior to conversion, the supreme and basic problem, I have no solution to any problem. The Kingdom of God is not a republic, but the Kingdom of God is not yet.

Your fifth comment is particularly interesting. Here, in all its baldness, is that Anglo-Saxon refusal to regard anything but the immediate and the obvious. In your preoccupation with Germany you delivered Europe to Russia (the menace of which was never remote nor obscure). Now in your outraged, outrageous innocence, you can see nothing else but Russia. You think the Marshall Plan is vision; it's hindsight. You think the people you betrayed should love you. They have been betrayed once too often. America was their last illusion. Gentlemen, there is a breaking point in the human spirit, where either God takes over or all is lost. In either case one no longer looks to men, even Americans. One rests in God or rests in nothing, which is nihilism, which is not a word but a condition of soul, to which I am not entirely a stranger. At the risk of giving comfort to the already too comfortable I would say to you that behind the Iron Curtain the action of grace is tremendous. It has to be. But the lamp belongs to the night, and only the fool forgets it.

J. E. P. BUTLER.

Zurich, Switzerland.

TO the Editors: I may be stressing the obvious, but Mr. von Kuehnelt-Leddihn is a dangerous man. . . . He is not dangerous so much because he has a love for totalitarianism, which is no less mischievous because he puts a Christian label on it. . . .

But Mr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn is a dangerous man because he is what one might call a Christian Nihilist. He is one of those pacemakers of both brown and red totalitarianism. They intellectualize evil. That absolves

[3] Cf. Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Comm. in ep. ad Romanos* c. XI Lect. 2.

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from evil deeds. The same people also get a certain satisfaction out of the miseries of others (the roots of sadism, and traces of it are plain in this article). Having thus resolved that evil is triumphant and that suffering is a natural corollary, this Christian nihilist strikes a heroic pose and—quoting postcard verses, Latin phrases and French *chansons*—descends into the catacombs. There he would pleasantly wallow in his eschatological gloom.

Lest there be any misunderstanding, I am not Austrian, but Swiss. A. HAETTENSCHWILLER.

BETWEEN FEAR AND HOPE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: In the January 16 issue of your periodical you published a review of my book, "Between Fear and Hope." The reviewer, Mr. Ralph de Toledano, obviously does not share my views on current problems, particularly the problems of anti-Semitism and fascism. But instead of polemizing against me, he sees fit to indulge in the most shocking distortion of my statements and to impute to me opinions that I have never held. I cite one item as typical. Mr. Toledano asks your readers to take his word for it that I fail to mention the treatment accorded to Poles deported to Russia. Actually several pages of my book (164-8) are devoted to accounts of persecution suffered in Russia by Polish citizens. I could prove that every single one of my reviewer's assertions about my book is equally contrary to fact, and it seems to me that your readers are entitled to know this.

S. L. SHNEIDERMAN.

TO the Editors: I really don't know where to begin in answering Mr. Shneiderman's letter. And since it would have obviously been to his advantage not (repeat, not) to get into a controversy, I just can't see why he wrote it.

No, I do not share Mr. Shneiderman's views of current problems. I am no apologist for the Soviet Union. I am no apologist for anti-Semitism in Poland, Russia, or the United States. Mr. Shneiderman abhors anti-Semitism of the right, but is strangely silent on its Stalinoid cousin.

To get down to cases, however, I am willing to take up his challenge on the one item he "cites." Mr. Shneiderman charges that I distort his statements in regard to the treatment of Poles in Russia. My review read:

"His account of interviews with Poles repatriated from Russia makes no mention of the slave labor camps to which they were sent, the treatment they were accorded, the multitudes who perished."

I repeat that statement after reading the pages 164-8 mentioned in his letter. There is *no* mention of the slave labor camps, *no* mention of the brutal treatment they received in the camps, *no* mention of the multitudes that perished. Instead, there is a snide and calculated effort to discredit all those who were bitterly critical of the Soviet Union after having been subject to its tender ministrations. Mr. Shneiderman brushes them off as people "disillusioned" because Russia was not as glowingly perfect as they had expected. His whole tone in this section is condescending and antagonistic. Mr. Shneiderman never bothered to read the depositions of the pitiful handful of Poles who survived Magadan and the other Soviet concentration camps. I have, and I shall never forget it. RALPH DE TOLEDANO.

UNION MONOPOLY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: Today, labor of the building trade unions stands accused of being responsible for many of the ills which beset their industry. The victims of the unhappy situation are the general public who find it necessary to build new buildings or alter existing structures. It is difficult to understand why union leaders seemingly do not appreciate the ill-feeling being engendered toward labor by such practices as deliberate slow-downs in production, featherbedding of various kinds, factional disputes. Recently a personal experience, unimportant in itself, left its mark.

Having purchased a building to house my business, it became necessary to do a series of minor alterations: a partition eliminated here, a new door cut through there, certain rehabilitation to the plumbing, old electrical outlets dispensed with and several new outlets and base receptacles installed. When it came to the electrical work, I called in a contractor recommended by the former owner of the building as being competent and thoroughly familiar with the existing wiring. On analyzing what had to be done, the job resolved itself to approximately two days work for one man. The estimate, "cheerfully furnished," was excessive, to my way of thinking, and the contractor agreed that it was a large amount of money to spend for what needed to be done. He pointed out that union regulations required that he send me not one man but two—an electrician and a helper—and he had to charge me for the time consumed by both men while stopping at his shop to pick up the tools. At this point, my union contractor hinted—off the record to be sure—that if I knew some good non-union electrician, I could save a lot of money. This seemed a salutary suggestion, and I was impressed with the cooperative spirit which prompted it. The thought crossed my mind that after all the electrical union was probably not as tough as reputed. The contractor was still in my office when one of the draftsmen proffered the information that he had a good friend over in New Jersey who was an excellent non-union electrician and would be glad to pick up a few dollars on the side. If I had any misgivings as to the competency of the fellow from New Jersey, they were promptly dispelled when the contractor, having discussed the work with him on the telephone, pronounced "That guy knows his stuff." The work progressed without benefit of union labor and, I might add, to the complete satisfaction of the two parties concerned.

The young electrician in question learned his trade as an apprentice in a large industrial plant before the war. During the war he worked as a fullfledged electrician in a shipyard. At this point, it should be explained that the electricians working in industrial plants such as auto-

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mobile factories, breweries, etc., are members of the CIO, while electricians in the building trades belong to IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers), an AFL affiliate. Upon being released from the shipyard, our friend immediately applied for a card in the proper AFL. This was denied him on the grounds that admission to this union is only granted to the sons of the members. It would seem that this regulation is strictly adhered to, for, while several members in good standing, close friends of the applicant, really did everything possible to help, nothing could be accomplished. The frustrated electrician has had to resort to bartending evenings and picking up odd jobs in the daytime in order to support his wife and child.

Such exclusiveness on the part of the union would be indefensible at any time, but is especially so now, when there is admittedly a dearth of trained men. If the labor movement is primarily concerned with the rights of the working man, the labor unions should be the first to decry a discriminating practice that is both selfish and un-American. The theory behind this regulation is that the old guard in the organization strived and suffered to get their union to its present enviable position and therefore have the right to reserve the fruits for the exclusive benefit of their sons. Has any group the right to deprive others of the means of earning a living? Members of various labor groups appearing before the Congressional Committees engaged in weighing the merits of the Taft-Hartley Act stoutly attested that no such legislation was needed, that things were all right as they were. All right for whom? Monopolies of other varieties have been the subject of Congressional attention heretofore, why not this one now. Perhaps, Mr. Cort could explain. J. SANFORD SHANLEY, *Architect.*

The Stage & Screen

John Bull's Other Island

I THINK this Shavian dissection of "the real old Ireland" makes a very good introduction to Edward Hilton's and Michael MacLiammoir's Dublin Gate Theatre. The company is excellent and it is extraordinarily good luck, I feel, to be able to get this particular Shaw authentically delivered. The parliamentary arguments contained in the piece—Home Rule, etc., in 1904—do seem to me mainly historically interesting. But the chief premise of the comedy—an examination of the sentimentally winning Englishman as opposed to the coldly realistic Irishman—is as apt as ever it was, and as novel and witty. On this end of the scheme, both Mr. Edwards and Mr. MacLiammoir do valiantly indeed. Edwards's "Broadbent" is exactly chubby enough, genial enough, and (if I may mention it as a technical master-stroke), adenoidal enough, to bring roars from any house. It is true Mr. MacLiammoir has by far the tougher job with the intelligent "Larry Doyle." In fact, I should say this is probably the most difficult part Shaw ever wrote. If you compare it with the "John Tanner" now being admirably played by Maurice Evans a little further up the Street, I think you will find that the parts are almost the same length; there are the same number of intolerably long speeches, built into the same complex syntax. (There is no character, of course, in the entire Shavian opera, who was ever dealt a simple monosyllable by the author). But whereas "Tanner" is ebullient: can and must rant, wave his wings, shout; "Larry Doyle," on the other hand, must remain calm and cool, although just as incessant. He is a talking cucumber. And let me add that as a talking cucumber, Mr. MacLiammoir is heroic, to say the least. As a matter of fact, the whole piece is a kind of theatrical cucumber: it has no curtain tags; it has no heroine (Norah Reilly being the second most difficult part ever penned and here charmingly played by Meriel Moore); and it's long, knobby, somewhat ill-shapen, and very, very fresh. And green.

There has been a lack of fanfare about the arrival of this company which is somewhat puzzling to me. I've got a terrible feeling that they may not yet have grasped the "American Way" of our theatre. All of their advance publicity has made sense rather than promotion. Their physical production, consisting of the most simple painted settings, displays style rather than money. Their record as an ensemble is internationally enviable. They write as well as act, and they act amazingly well. All of which is more than sufficient for them to go down in this column as one of the honest delights of the season. (*at the Mansfield*)

Nights of Wrath

IT IS distressing to have to admit that Armand Salacrou has been very ill-served in the production of his play by Erwin Piscator at the Dramatic Workshop of the New School. Mr. Salacrou is seriously experimenting with techniques and he has also something serious to say. His play is a fierce denunciation of collaborationists and *attentistes* in the years 1938-1944 in German-defeated France. In attempting to bridge this enormous gap of events, the author has essayed a flash-back method familiar to the cinema, and it is necessary to say at once that the method is confusing and not really stageworthy, I think. The story can be briefly stated. A successful, wealthy young man, husband and father of children, discovers that the wounded friend he has let into his home is a member of the Resistance, has just blown up a train, and is being thoroughly sought after by the police and Gestapo. He allows his wife to run to the nearest collaborationist, an influential manufacturer, and the friend is subsequently delivered to the Germans and to prison, torture, and death. As the piece opens this *attentiste* is shot to death at the foot of his own stairs by further members of the Resistance. The collaborationist enters and is also killed. And thereafter, all of the dead arise and tell their tales backward through time, with intervals of return to the original scene. I confess there were scenes in the play when I did not honestly know when a character was dead and when he was not. And there were further complexities in having absent or dreamed characters present on the scene. With so many episodes it is almost impossible to *piece* the plot, which would not be the case if the medium used were a movie

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camera—where the effect would be a continuous flow of action and there would be no necessity for curtain-intervals at all. But certainly, one does not blame Mr. Salacrou for being merely unsuccessful in delivering another staged movie. One ought to be grateful to him, as a matter of fact, since at least he is conscious of what he is trying to do. I think perhaps this serious effort ought, with any luck at all, to force some sort of critical assessment of the two mediums so that we should not again and again have to watch the big Broadway money so constantly being spent on camera copies—on moving scenery, treadmilled actors, canned voices, and a physical setup reminiscent of nothing so much as a railway yard.

Moreover, it would not be exactly fair to indulge in so much technical analysis of a sincere play, if it were not for the deplorable extra machinery added to it by Mr. Piscator and his technicians. The piece has, despite its faults, a sure emotional impact. When I say I left the theatre in tears, that is honestly an admission from this column, as anyone will agree. But instead of it's being played simply before some neutral back-drop merely pointed by lights, the business is done up in projected scenery, a turntable stage which creaks around at least eleven times, all the added foolery of the big street. Now, granted that Mr. Piscator runs a school in which designers are enlisted as well as actors, directors, etc.; and granted that he owes *all* of his pupils a chance to work, it's still his first responsibility to justify the play in hand. And this he has not done for Mr. Salacrou. The piece is poorly cast. With the exception of Loren Denney and Vray Cobert, the acting adds nothing. (*at the President*)

Note

I RATHER imagine some 30,000 other people must be as bewildered as I am by the final and February issue of *Theatre Arts Monthly*. Nowhere in the pages of this issue was there the slightest hint that the magazine had been sold without its editor's knowledge; that, after thirty years of publishing, it was dead, defunct, gone. I am convinced that any number of my more influential colleagues will be offering Rosamund Gilder the forum she needs for concluding the intrepid editorship which has served us all so surely, carefully, and internationally, in *Theatre Arts*. But just in case she can use it, I would like also to offer her this column, with gratitude. For anytime; and just as much space as my own harassed editors can possibly spare. KAPPO PHELAN.

Similarity *Is* Intentional

IF HOLLYWOOD continues to make good movies using actual backgrounds, it may soon win even those detractors who sneer at the American product. And furthermore it may also win the artistic as well as commercial place it deserves in the film world as a whole. In recent years such pictures as "House on 92nd Street," "Boomerang!" "Kiss of Death," "The Best Years of Our Lives," "The Fugitive" and several others added greatly to their realism by being filmed at the story's locale. Another valuable addition to this list is the new *"Call Northside 777,"* which was based on a true story and was expertly photographed in Chicago with street scenes and backgrounds that are the real thing. Catholics may rightfully regret that the central figure, a convict sentenced to 99 years and supposedly a Catholic, has such a mistaken idea toward marriage that he persuades his wife to divorce him and remarry. But no doubt the film's adaptors and scriptwriters felt obliged to stick to the facts in the case. Certainly Director Henry Hathaway has visualized the story extremely well, so well that the picture seems like a documentary. A reporter on the Chicago *Times* (James Stewart) inspired by his editor (Lee J. Cobb) finally becomes convinced that the convict (Richard Conte) was not given a fair trial and furthermore was not even involved in the murder for which he was wrongfully sentenced. Against terrific odds this reporter proves his points. Perhaps the film's ending is a little weak; just saying when the convict is freed after serving eleven years, that it is a big thing when a sovereign state admits an error, is not enough. However the film's technique, the fine acting throughout its large cast, its prison scenes and Chicago sets, and its fascinating use of technical details like the wire-photo system and the lie detector add up to an intelligent movie—one of which Hollywood can be proud.

Another film that deserves commendation for its factual atmosphere is *"To the Ends of the Earth,"* which was directed by Robert Stevenson with a minimum of slick hullaballoo and a maximum of straightforward exposition. Its theme alone is exciting and unusual enough without the addition of glamor, love story or hopped-up histrionics. Dick Powell almost underplays the T-man who chases narcotic clues from this country, to China, to Egypt, to Cuba and back to New York. Many of the scenes were actually photographed abroad, and although the rough stuff gets pretty violent at times, the whole picture has a documentary air that is sustained even through the suspense in the climax. Signe Hasso and a large supporting cast surround Mr. Powell in this movie that is almost like an illustrated poppy-to-opium lecture. With its main point (that no country has

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borders in the narcotics war because *everyone* belongs to the human race) all peoples should agree; and for helping to prove this point, this film deserves applause.

Two other new movies go out of their way to use locale in their plots, but their themes are handled so superficially that any attempts at realism are purely accidental. *"Three Daring Daughters"* journeys from New York to Caribbean ports, but it is mainly concerned with a silly story in which Jeanette MacDonald falls in love with Iturbi and marries him in spite of the opposition of her three daughters who hope she will be reunited with their father. This plot's relation to real life is almost nil; and not Miss MacDonald's singing, nor Iturbi's playing, not the flossy sets in technicolor can sell us on its muddled thinking.

"Sleep, My Love" tries to be another "Angel Street" or "Gaslight," but doesn't succeed in spite of the fact that Director Douglas Sirk manages to work up some good scary suspense. It has a few realistic New York touches, but these do not overcome the plot's shallow delving into psychology. I doubt that a normal person could be mesmerized into the position in which Claudette Colbert, as the wife of wicked Don Ameche, finds herself. Actually she doesn't find herself. It is hero Robert Cummings who leads her out of the hypnotic maze into which her husband has thrust her. Perhaps if you check your brains at the door, you'll get a couple of thrills out of a chilling situation. The cast, assisted by George Coulouris and Hazel Brooks, try hard enough; but you have to labor with them. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

The Wagner Act Still Lives

IT MAY be comforting to know that the Taft-Hartley Act has not entirely destroyed the Wagner Act. There are a few edible chunks of the latter still floating around in the anti-labor stew concocted by a hostile Congress.

Robert Denham, counsel for the National Labor Relations Board, has been getting very unpopular in labor circles, but forced by the law, he has now come riding to the rescue of the United Auto Workers, CIO, in the best horse opera manner, and that too should be recorded for posterity.

It seems that General Motors, sniffing the strong heady aroma of reaction in the air, thought that it could steal a march in its campaign to convince the GM workers that unions are, after all, unnecessary luxuries, much too fattening, and why can't we just get together and straighten things out in the good old-fashioned way?

Operating along this line, GM announced a new insurance plan for its employees—largely financed by the workers and entirely run by the company, it is true, but still a benevolent idea. It refused to discuss this plan with Walter Reuther and friends, who had very definite ideas about it, not all complimentary by any means. Reuther maintained that the plan was properly a subject for collective bargaining—the old Wagner Act had said so, and the Taft-Hartley Act had not rooted it out. He appealed to Denham and the NLRB for an injunction that would stop GM from going ahead with the plan. Lo and behold, Denham came through with the injunction. GM was foiled again.

About the same time Charles T. Douds, regional director of the NLRB in New York, was handing down a decision that the recent election held among employees of the Lafayette National Bank of Brooklyn should be trampled in the dust, thrown in the ashcan, declared null and void. And this too was a testimonial to the vigor of the mangled Wagner Act.

A week before the election, which was to decide between "no union" and Local 153 of the Office Employees International Union, AFL, the president of the Lafayette Bank, Walter Jeffries Carlin, had written a letter to his employees, about Local 153 and the coming election. As you may remember, his right to do this was at first questionable under the Wagner Act, though later clarified. Under Taft-Hartley it was proclaimed as one of the basic rights of the Constitution. So Mr. Carlin really laid it on.

He said that Local 153 was interested in nothing but collecting the workers' dues; that it had no knowledge of or experience with, banks; that if they voted for the union, they would be forced to go on strike and picket against their will, would be forced to engage in sympathy strikes, could be fired at the will of the union, etc., etc. Not only were these statements only held by the labor side to be untrue, but several of the indicated actions are actually outlawed by the Taft-Hartley Act, and the bank's attorney must certainly have informed the management of this fact.

Finally, the letter went so far as to threaten that depositors would withdraw their money from the bank if the workers went union, because they (the depositors) would be afraid that nothing could be considered confidential any more, that all their financial secrets would (presumably) be carried lickety-split to union headquarters. And as a parting shot the bank president said that "if you should join this union, you would find it difficult if not impossible to get a job with any other bank."

A week later workers in the four branches of the bank voted 84 to 44 against the union, although a large majority had previously signed cards saying that they needed the union like they needed fresh air. Not that it was all Mr. Carlin's doing. It is reported that at about the same time the president wrote the letter a vice-president took several of the pro-union ringleaders to lunch and told them to go around and tell the other people to vote against the union. Just like that. And none of them had the guts to tell him off. Such is the fear of losing one's job; such is the weakness of man; such is the confusion and ignorance about one's rights under the law; such is the power of the reactionary swing and the kind of self-assurance it has given anti-union management.

Well, anyway, Regional Director Douds of the NLRB has now thrown the election out. None of the coerced ringleaders testified against their boss, but the letter was enough to hang him. Mr. Douds made the excellent point, among others, that if membership in the union would make it "difficult if not impossible" to get a job in another bank, then it would seem to follow that there must be some kind of a banking "blacklist." Which was clearly against the law, even the Taft-Hartley Law.

These things are comforting to know. Things are not

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quite as bad in Gloccamorra as they seemed. And by the same token those unions that have decided to use the Labor Board are not quite as stupid as some have maintained. Though lynched and buried a hundred times by its enemies, the Wagner Act still lives and breathes, still stands over the weak and defenseless, protecting them from the likes of the Lafayette National Bank.

JOHN C. CORT.

Storm Warnings

GEORGE G. HIGGINS

BY THE TIME this review appears in print, a prominent representative of the Catholic social movement of Europe will have finished his visit here and set sail from New York on the *Queen Mary* with a copy of the latest Economic Report of the President* in his satchel. Whether he will find time to read it before he docks at Southampton—what with the variety of innocent distractions which are provided on the *Queen* for the legitimate entertainment of even the cleric of the strict observance—will depend on the weather and of course on his will power and self-discipline. If he does force himself to read it, he will walk down the gang plank onto Europe's troubled soil even more convinced than when he was in Washington a few weeks ago that the United States is headed for trouble. Economic trouble, that is. A depression, to be more specific. It was only a hunch on his part when he was in Washington, but it worried him not a little.

When he arrived in Washington, he had just completed a lecture tour which brought him face to face with seventy-five audiences in twenty or thirty American cities. He was exhausted and confused, but probably not as confused as many of the Americans with whom he had conversed from New York City to Los Angeles, to Dixie and back to New York again. He was confused at what he could only describe, very sympathetically, be it said, as the confusion of Americans themselves. Americans, he thought, were almost dangerously confused. Or maybe "confused" isn't the word he intended to use. Maybe "apathetic" is a better word; or "deluded"; or, saving our national feelings, maybe even "ignorant." Too many Americans, he suggested, seem to be living in a dream world, either oblivious altogether of the facts of economic life, or, at best, hoping against hope that the United States, alone of all the important nations in the world, can somehow hang on desperately to a tradition of economic individualism which in Europe is at least as dead as Hitler is—and that's pretty dead. Americans, to be sure, complained about the cost of living in the presence of this foreigner. But he didn't get the impression that they were really as concerned about inflation as the facts would warrant their being. More specifically, he felt that too few of the people who had been so hospitable to him (and himself a symbol, mind you, of what many of them would refer to inaccurately as "Socialism") were sufficiently aware of the important fact which one of his American heroes, the late Monsignor John A. Ryan, had warned them about a thousand different times in a thousand different essays: namely, that the basic cause of our almost chronic economic instability is the maldistribution of current income.

Well, this foreigner, who hadn't had the time to corroborate his "hunch" while he was running for trains and airplanes in the United States, can do so at his leisure on the good *Queen Mary*. The statistics are all in the President's most recent Economic Report, a copy of which was presented to him, in lieu of something fluffier and more appropriate to the occasion, as we bade him farewell and *bon voyage*.

The President's Economic Report of 1948 (which is reprinted in the present volume along with his earlier Reports of January and June, 1947) is sober fare for even the most optimistic member of the Soroptomist Club of Middletown or Scarsdale. It's chock full of facts which a Roosevelt could and probably would have used very effectively in a fireside chat as an argument in favor of resurrecting the New Deal, which, for all practical purposes, has been dead and buried and rather scandalously unlamented, lo these many years.

Our good friend from Europe thinks that we are headed for a depression. The President and/or his Council of Economic Advisers (who contribute a somewhat non-committal introduction to the present volume and who can probably be presumed to have written at least the substance of the three Reports) prefer to employ a euphemism. They talk about a "recession." "The purposes of the Employment Act," they say, "are beginning to meet their first real test. Unless we as a nation show an ability to impose restraints upon ourselves and to utilize the machinery of our representative government to devise well-considered regulatory measures, we stand in great danger that runaway prices, overextended credit, and unbalanced developments will lead to an economic recession. We cannot be sure that such a recession would not be severe and recovery slow and painful."

"Unbalanced developments" is the operative phrase in this all too tentative warning—a warning which somehow must be edited for popular consumption and shouted from the housetops. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

By "unbalanced developments" the President's Report means principally the lack of balance among wages, prices, and profits. "Back of the income and expenditure totals whose trends have just been traced," the President tells us, "lies a whole network of price, wage and profit relationships which determine whether or not we move toward economic stability. The changes in these relationships during 1947 have not accomplished that end, nor have they assured the maintenance of high production and employment in 1948. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine the underlying facts more carefully and to uncover the dangerous tendencies which they include."

Unless I am tampering with the spirit and the letter of the Report, I gather that by indirection at least the President is saying that the most dangerous of these "dangerous tendencies" is the tendency on the part of industry to ask for prices which are too high, to reap profits which are also too high, and, in consequence, to give wages (real wages) which are too low. Too low for what? Too low, of course, for the immediate, here-and-now economic welfare of the individual worker and his family. But also, and in the long run perhaps more unethically, too low for the maintenance of maximum production and maximum employment.

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* The Economic Reports of the President. Introduction by Council of Economic Advisers. Reynal. $2.50.

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Let's look at the record.

Wages: "Though labor as a whole through wage gains was as well off at the end of 1947 as at the beginning, workers had lost ground steadily in terms of real income during the last half of 1946. This, primarily, explains the 'second round' of wage increases. It also helps to account for the present movement for further wage advances unless an effective anti-inflation program is adopted."

Prices: "Since June 1947, wholesale prices have risen at an annual rate of 20 percent and consumers' prices at a rate of 12 percent. . . . This stability of profits throughout the year indicates that business generally reacted to increases in costs by increasing prices rather than by absorbing them in whole or in part by reducing profits. It is also noteworthy that high and stable profits continued even where there was no appreciable expansion in production."

Profits: "Although a portion of the large profits earned during 1947 merely compensated for changes in prices, profits on the whole were above the levels necessary to furnish incentives and funds for the expansion of business and to promote the sustained health of the economy." (And how!)

In the face of these facts and others which are listed in an imposing array of statistical tables and charts (e.g., the fact that 28.2 percent of all American *families* are earning less than $2,000 a year) the NAM still lapses piously into mystical incantations to the great god Production. The President is admirably patient in his analysis of this persistent superstition. While admitting (and who could deny?) that increased production is desirable and necessary, he adds that "even were our employment and production goals for 1948 fully realized, this would not of itself meet our purchasing-power objective nor substantially dispel the need for other affrmative anti-inflation measures. More than this, we face the danger that the continuance of maximum employment and production will be impossible unless we achieve the necessary purchasing-power adjustments in the price-wage-profit structure."

So we're back where we started from. We are face to face again with the cold, inescapable fact that you can't sell more refrigerators and automobiles in 1948 to people who will have less effective purchasing power than they had in 1947. Or can you?

The President and his Council of Economic Advisers have made a great contribution by forcing us, patiently and by dint of unspectacular economic analysis, to concentrate on the causes of inflation instead of its symptoms. *The* big problem, to repeat perhaps *ad nauseam,* is a lack of balance among prices, wages and profits—a problem which is rooted at the very heart of our economic system and which cannot be exorcised by full-page advertisements about production or cured by salves and poultices. "The ability to produce," says the President's Report, "will not alone assure economic stability and growth. Recurrent periods of recession or depression have led to the realization [in some quarters] that maximum resource utilization depends upon many adjustments within our complex economy. It is necessary for us to apply systematic forward thinking to the shaping of our economic institutions and the practices of the men and women whose behavior determines how these institutions will in fact operate."

The trouble is, as the reviewer sees it, that the President and his Council of Economic Advisers don't even begin to tell us how we are to effect these "many adjustments within our complex economy." Oh, they do of course, after a fashion, but haltingly, as it were, and rather unconvincingly. Once again they outline the familiar ten points of the President's anti-inflation program. Good enough. But these are emergency measures. What about the future? The future belongs to competition. So? But competition, to quote from *"Quadragesimo Anno,"* "while justified and certainly useful provided it is kept within certain limits, clearly cannot direct economic life—a truth which the outcome of the application in practice of the tenets of this evil individualistic spirit has more than sufficiently demonstrated." The President's Report, be it said, acknowledges that "in considering the character of competition in the future, it is impossible to ignore the tremendous changes which have occurred in the organization of business control over the past 50 or 60 years." But nowhere is it acknowledged that competition "clearly cannot direct economic life." Quite the contrary.

★

Occasionally, it is true, the President's Report almost faces up meaningfully to the inadequacy of straight competition. Almost. For example: "The collective bargaining process to determine wages also plays a vital part in the determination and maintenance of healthy price-wage-profit policies. It cannot fulfil its function if it is used merely as a test of the sheer force which one or the other can exert in the pursuit of immediate self-interest. Collective bargaining must be based upon a better understanding of the long-range interests of management and labor in the context of the interests of the whole economy." And again: "One of the purposes of the Employment Act is to provide a new climate for pricing policies. The act contemplates that the combined resources of business, labor, agriculture, and the Government will be used to do away with business fluctuations of the violence known in the past."

Excellent. But if collective bargaining is to be used as something else and something better than a test of sheer force, how shall this be done unless the scope of collective bargaining is expanded, à la Reuther and the CIO Industry Council Plan, to include a number of issues (and, above all, prices) which the Report would leave to the uninhibited play of genuine competition? And if labor, business, agriculture, and the Government are to combine their resources effectively "to do away with business fluctuations," will this still be competition? Or will it be "planning?"

The *Wall Street Journal* seems to feel that the Council of Economic Advisers has unfriendly designs on the American system of competition. The *Daily Worker* seems to think (but only as of very recent date, if you know what I mean) that the CIO Industry Council Plan is fascist. Both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Daily Worker* are wrong. The Council of Economic Advisers, if anything, is committed too hopefully to the beneficence of competition. And the CIO *Industry Council Plan* is in the best traditions of democracy. Would that the CIO and the Council of Economic Advisers could somehow pool their resources and work out a viable substitute for the individualism of the *Wall Street Journal* and the

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undemocratic centralism (speaking very euphemistically) of the jittery boys on 14th Street. Only thus, it is suggested, can we possibly hope to solve, fairly and successfully, "the old and unsolved problem of assuring continuous maximum production by maintaining the maximum real purchasing power which must go with it without relying too long upon the depletion of savings, extraordinary use of credit, and an abnormal export surplus."

Meanwhile, a fervent "Amen" when the President, in pleading again for the enactment of his ten-point emergency program, reasons with his critics, ever so sweetly, as follows: "Whatever its character, if a depression occurs, it will be far more costly in human welfare and will involve the Government in far more pervasive intervention in the economic life of the country than the measures which are necessary to prevent it." Which probably means, in the vernacular, that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Or: "A stitch in time saves nine."

More Books

Cry. The Beloved Country. Alan Paton. Scribner. $3.00.

"CRY, THE BELOVED COUNTRY" is a novel of distinction, compounded of beauty of spirit such as one seldom encounters, particularly in fiction which treats of the bitter problem of race, and of a quite unusual beauty of language. This last deserves mention. The book is written in what one must suppose is the English equivalent of the language of the Zulus, and in its cadenced expressiveness, it is very moving.

The story is, simply, the story of a search. Stephen Kumalo, the luminously gentle native pastor of a small village in Natal, receives a letter from a fellow priest summoning him to Johannesburg where his sister Gertrude urgently needs help. Hoping fearfully that he may also find his lost son, Kumalo takes the small savings put aside for the boy's education and sets out on the long journey. In the slums of the great city, where so many of his people have vanished, he finds them both, his sister a prostitute and Absalmon a murderer. Kumalo is unable to help the woman or to save the boy. Gertrude slips away from him, drawn back into squalid corruption and Absalom is executed for his crime.

Back in his valley, Kumalo had not fully realized the disorientation of his people, whose tribal society has been destroyed by the white man and replaced only by a system of segregation and repression. But through his personal tragedy he comes to see the scope and depth of the tragedy which encompasses his country, and he realizes that, although they may resist or avoid it, it is the central fact in the lives of every man. Kumalo's son has killed the son of his white neighbor; his personal sorrow is a microcosmic reflection of the wider problem and that problem is the tragedy of fear which cripples white man and dark man alike, driving both to violence.

The stature of this book comes from the spirit of compassion and the intellectual honesty which set it apart from many others dealing with the same theme. It is more than just a fictionalized social tract. The author is primarily concerned, as he should be, with people: with what people are, what happens to them and how they feel and think. Nor does Mr. Paton allow himself to

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over-simplify the complex issues at stake by indulging in polemic or special pleading. It is true that imposed inequality flourishes and that injustice is done, even in the name of the law, that one group is master and that there is no present parity in suffering. But the basic point is never obscured, which is that all men stand to lose, and lose far more than they can afford, if they live by fear and not by love. Yet this could happen. As the priest Msimangu whispers: "I have only one fear in my heart, that one day when they turn to loving they will find we are turned to hating." ADRIENNE W. FOULKE.

Other Voices, Other Rooms. Truman Capote. Random. $2.75.

"OTHER VOICES, OTHER ROOMS," is a nebulous and often weird first novel by a gifted and polished twenty-three year old Southerner whose chief talent lies in an unusual ability to create a gossamer mood of horror, perversity and poetic somnambulism. In this atmosphere both reader and thirteen year old Joel Knox are precipitated into the dilapidated and aristocratic mansion populated by the stercoricolous personalities at Skully's Landing. It was here that "from the first he'd noticed in the house complex sounds, sounds on the edge of silence, settling sighs of stone and board, as though the old rooms inhaled-exhaled constant wind, and he'd heard Randolph say: 'We're sinking, you know, sank four inches last year.'"

In this chimerically-sinister setting, sensitive Joel for the first time meets Miss Amy, his step-mother, who dines with her gloves on throughout her imaginary birthday, and his asthmatic, effeminate, sherry-drinking cousin, Randolph, who, believing himself stillborn, has, in a moment of hysteria, shot Joel's father, Mr. Sanson. This mysterious man now languishes, paralyzed, in bed, fondling his ubiquitous red tennis balls.

With the bizarre succor of Jesus Fever's haunting death, and his granddaughter Zoe's grotesque flight, and Little Sunshine's sorcery in a long-abandoned hotel beside a bayou, Mr. Capote's subaqueous characters emerge only in one instance from their decadent isolation and languid exuviation—in the form of Idabell Tompkins, cruel and insolent tomboy, so remarkably well drawn as to succeed in uniting into novel form what are actually three long short stories of the Spanish moss and swampland variety.

Much may still be desired in this tale of a pilgrimage through adolescence whose sources appear to be first-hand and autobiographical despite the apparent influences of McCullers, Barnes, Faulkner and Proust. "Other Voices, Other Rooms" must be reckoned with as a fascinating experiment in symbols and images by this young but mature and skilful writer, notwithstanding the immediate reservations made by those who prefer obscure substance to definite shadow. W. E. HARRISS.

Collected Poems. Alfred Noyes. Lippincott. $5.00.

FOR THOSE who have loved Mr. Noyes's ballads and swooped through "Go down to Kew in lilac time" all these years, this 704-page volume of all his poems should be more than a feast.

Mr. Noyes is almost an anachronism—a writer of lengthy ballads; "Drake" is 110 pages, "Tales of the Mermaid Tavern" runs to 142, and "The Torchbearers" undulates for a mere 305! Mr. Noyes is particularly devoted to the late Elizabethan period of English history, and not a jerkin, tankard nor poignard is out of place.

It is an indisputable fact that Alfred Noyes is master par excellence of the epic-ballad, but it is perhaps not so well known that he has written short pieces which have a certain lilting charm, and I think, show the poet off to better advantage. "The Sussex Sailor," "May Day Carol," and "The Clear May" are three examples of spontaneous song.

Mr. Noyes's eye for realistic detail and historic swashbuckling is really astounding, but it would be hard to write so grandly, so passionately without growing mush-sentimental at times. He does. The lover of undiluted adventure and colorful history need not (and won't) be deterred by this rather conspicuous lapse.

A few more modern poets, while omitting Mr. Noyes's sentimentality and naiveté, could at least observe how musical poetry is written. The day of the prolonged ballad may be over, but unless we are perfectly content to become prosy robots, singing is not only human, but at times imperative. ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

The Malady of the Ideal. Van Wyck Brooks. Pennsylvania. $2.00.

THIS beautifully printed little volume is a reprint of Van Wyck Brook's second book, originally published in England in 1913 in an edition of only two hundred copies. Along with "The Wine of the Puritans" (1908), it provides an early statement of the central problem of his work: idealism in art. Its republication will be welcomed by students of Mr. Brooks and of the development of literary criticism in America.

Mr. Brooks here studies that "malady of the ideal" which destroys the springs of creative action in the cases of Sénancour, Maurice de Guérin, and Amiel. "Abnormal souls, whom the necessary compromise of life itself has made abnormal, they see nothing but the infinite and fall back upon existence with an immense weariness." Victims of a wasting disease, they lose the power of creation, of ordering thought, and produce only fragments. For them the private journal becomes "a kind of vicarious work of art." With vast sympathy and poetic insight Mr. Brooks demonstrates conclusively that aesthetic introspection is no solution of the artist's dilemma.

Catholic readers will find the study of Maurice de Guérin, with its treatment of Catholic symbolism, of particular interest, though the whole essay is rich in perceptions and intuitions. MASON WADE.

Juarez and His Mexico. Ralph Roeder. Viking. 2 *vols.* $10.00.

THROUGH two volumes totalling 763 pages, the author of this work pursues the story of Benito Juárez, from birth to death, with full details of the Liberal movement, the French intervention, the Three Years' War, and the Reform that ended the economic and cultural position which the Catholic Church had maintained from the days of the Spanish colony. Even the story of the wars for Independence is retold at length, lest there be any doubt whatsoever of the political and cultural faith of the author and of the reasons for his unswerving confidence in and worship of the subject of his biography.

The whole tone of the book, far from being that of an impartial examination of facts, reflects the white heat

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and crusading spirit of the freethinkers of 1857, as if there had been no lapse of time or possibility of qualification. Thus the movements of Hidalgo and Morelos for independence are praised to the sky, while the achievement of independence under Iturbide is described simply as a "swindle," which had to be redeemed by another generation of "social insurgents" of whom "Juárez was one."

With this point of view it is impossible for the author to throw any new light on the Church-State struggle under Juárez, or, indeed, to present any living picture of the country, the people, and the times in which Juárez lived. The Catholic Church is described, in its endeavor to cling to the right of naming its own bishops, as "a huge, hard, impenetrable foreign body embedded in its [Mexico's] very constitution, defying its control and defeating its functions at will." Seminary training is described as "the dogmatic ignorance indispensable to the sacred calling." The Battle of Buena Vista, it is alleged, "was lost for the benefit of the Church," and "the nation was in reality no more than a province of the Church."

Between interminable digressions, similar flashes suffice to clarify the author's view on other matters of concern, as when he describes "Madero and Carranza and Zapata and Calles and Obregon and Cardenas—a miscellaneous succession of militant amateurs and philanthropists and outlaws and politicians and apostles—" as "sweeping away the stale haze of the Diaz era."

A bibliography as well as index are provided, but unfortunately there are no footnote references to identify or authenticate the numerous quotations. Passing over the lyrical enthusiasm of the author for his hero, and refraining from comment on the author's interpretation of history, one may venture the opinion that this work would be much improved by extensive further cutting and by a more vigorous endeavor to reconstruct the mind and character of the people of Mexico outside the group of Liberal politicians around Juárez.

Something might be written relative to the influence of secret societies of the time, and considerably more might be devoted to the effects, immediate and remote, of the Reform, cultural, economic, and political. Nothing is said of Juárez's introduction of Positivism into Mexico, although some hint is given of his own ultimate faith in the statement that "Once he had outgrown the organized ignorance of God which he learned there [in the seminary], he found his faith in his fellow men, the Creator in the created, and religion in the progress of human society and its binding power in the breaking of bondage."

Despite the evidence of patient labor exhibited in this work, it is questionable whether it "will stand among the literary giants of our time," as the publishers maintain. The definitive life of Juárez may never be written, but there is still plenty of room for another attempt.

JAMES A. MAGNER.

Compendium of Theology, by St. Thomas Aquinas. Translated by Cyril Vollert. Herder. $4.00.

ST. THOMAS's "Compendium of Theology" was written during the last two years of his life, 1272-1274. It is a work of his maturity, composed after he had finished the *Contra Gentiles* and while he was still writing his immortal *Summa Theologica.* Like the latter, it is an unfinished work, a mere fragment of a projected

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Catholic Press Month, IV

This week's issue, the last in Catholic Press Month, speaks for itself. And next week The Commonweal will carry on at the same level of quality with such articles as:

AMERICANS — WITH RESERVATIONS, by Mary Rowell Carse, a spirited defense of the American Indian and a searching criticism of the bills introduced in Congress to liquidate Indian Reservations and divide everything up. Mrs. Carse proposes a convincing five point program for giving the original Americans their just due.

THE GREAT VENETIANS, by Robert Speaight, was inspired by a recent exhibit at Lausanne, Switzerland, which displayed its masterpieces in a highly effective manner. It deals with Renaissance artists and their decision to spiritualize their work "by a more intense employment of color and a more audacious disposition of form" . . .

ARTICULATE FOE OF TYRANNY, by Edward Skillin, Jr., is in the nature of a personal discovery —of a nineteenth century Argentine statesman and writer whose works (in generous excerpts) are now made available for the first time in English. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento was a man of parts.

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summary of theology under the headings of faith, hope, and charity. Death overtook him when he had finished only about a third of the original project, the section on faith and only ten chapters of the section on hope. What is left, however, is a jewel of theological thought, ranking with the *Summa Theologica* for clarity and profundity.

The translation measures up to the dignity and importance of the original. It is very readable, and it is neatly and clearly arranged into chapters and subdivisions. Besides the translation itself Father Vollert adds a bibliography and a very full index. Of special importance to the theologian is the preface, in which the translator points out the difference between the science of theology as envisaged by Saint Thomas and theology as it is treated in modern manuals. Apologetical preoccupations may easily lead to a neglect of the ideal of theology as Saint Thomas understood it, which is to penetrate into the truths of revelation, to assimilate them, and to invigorate our charity with them (vii).

This book is a valuable contribution to our growing theological literature. It will be of service to everyone interested in theology, whether he is a professional student or just an *amateur*. WILLIAM R. O'CONNOR.

The Well of The Unicorn. George U. Fletcher. Sloane. $3.50.

THIS dramatic tale, set in a never-never land, is reminiscent of T. H. White's "Sword within the Stone," though it is almost totally lacking in humor and its dream-world is as much Scandinavian as Arthurian. Its pseudonymous author is not content with providing a mere entertainment, and hints at parallels between the world of the Well (which is the well of peace) and our hard-beset world of Western Christendom, with enemies both within and without the gates. But most readers will be content to forget their own world in this stirring and imaginative one, which is rich with all humor of melodramatic drapings and dark with black magic.

Milk Route. Martha Ostenso. Dodd. $3.00.

THIS HOMELY, fictional survey of a little town in Minnesota in the first months of the postwar period is a convincing one. Both happiness and failure appear along the route in restrained but poignant guise. The story well reflects the current American mood of bewilderment and lack of sustained direction.

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